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ABSTRACT

In response to public concern, the Utah Comprehensive Guidance Program Model was developed with guidance as a full-fledged education program. Adoption of the model in middle/junior high schools and high schools, and the relationship of training in the model and state funding are discussed in the "Introduction." The situation prior to model development is discussed under "Attractiveness of the Model." The Utah model shares the major characteristics of the Gysbers/Henderson and the Missouri models, and provides a unique statewide approach to implementation. Key strategies and a history of the process are presented under "Strategy Used in Gaining Adoption of the Model." Pilot schools are listed. Under "Program Function," state, regional, and district roles are discussed. The text of the state statute delineating the state's contribution to the Comprehensive Guidance Program, and the "Administrative Rules for Comprehensive Guidance Utah State Board of Education" are both provided. "Program Success" describes the progress of implementation of the model and gives an overview of program results. A particularly successful feature of the program, the "Student Education Occupation Plan" is highlighted and other successful features are reviewed. Additional sections include "Future Goals" and "Advice to New Implementers." Resources and References sections are appended. (EMK)

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COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE PROGRAM

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The Comprehensive Guidance Program in Utah

Scott W. Bean
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Robert O. Brems
Associate Superintendent of Applied Technology Education

Dr. Lynn Jensen
Coordinator, Integrated Curriculum and Student Services

Judy Petersen
Specialist, Secondary Counseling and Career Development

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION
250 East 500 South
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

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The Comprehensive Guidance Program in Utah

The State of Utah is located in the center of the Rocky Mountain region with a population of slightly over two million residents. The state is highly urbanized with approximately 80 percent of the residents living in a narrow corridor within 50 miles of Salt Lake City. Forty school districts serve nearly 500,000 students. In 1988, the Utah State Office of Education launched an initiative to restructure the state's public secondary school guidance program based on a model developed by Norman Gysbers at the University of Missouri, Columbia, and program implementation strategies developed in Missouri. Utah is now in the tenth year of its implementation of the Comprehensive Guidance Program Model.

Introduction

During the 1980s, there was a growing sense of concern with the counseling and guidance program in Utah's public secondary schools. Counselor numbers were not keeping pace with a burgeoning student population. During this time, pupil/counselor ratios rose from 430/1 to 550/1. The counselor's role was frequently debated, widely varied, and dominated by a myriad of nonguidance activities. The counselor's job was not viewed as being very attractive, counselor training institutions were producing very few counselors, and the shortage of trained counselors was so severe that "certification" requirements were substantially reduced for entry-level counselors.

Counselors in the state were frequently criticized for providing one-dimensional "university-bound" guidance to students, and vocational educators had become particularly dissatisfied with the lack of guidance for students seeking to pursue vocational and technical training, work-based learning options, and direct entry into the work force. Program administrators in the State Office of Education and leaders of the local vocational directors' group believed dramatic measures were needed to restructure guidance in the state. They agreed to commit up to 10 percent of federal, state, and local vocational education resources for guidance support. However, tied to this commitment was a stipulation that guidance be established as a full-fledged education program.

The Utah Comprehensive Guidance Program Model varies little from Gysbers' model described in *Developing and Managing Your School Guidance Program* (Gysbers and Henderson, 1988) and *The Missouri Model* (Starr and Gysbers, 1993). However, Utah adopted the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) competencies as its desired student outcomes. While the Comprehensive Guidance Program Model, which has been adopted in Utah, shares all of the major characteristics of the Gysbers/Henderson and the Missouri models, it is singularly unique in its statewide approach to implementation and the near universal adoption of the model by the middle/junior high schools and high schools of the state.

By spring 1998, all but five of the 240 target middle/junior high schools and high schools committed to the model and participated in training, and 220 met stringent program "standards," which qualify them to receive their share of $6.9 million appropriated by the Utah State Legislature for the program. A collegial system of program management involving the State Office of Education, regional and district administrators, and a peer review process is used to ensure that each school's program maintains fidelity to a set of very high programs standards. Following is a description of the strategies used to effect this level of Comprehensive Guidance Program implementation, successes achieved to date, planned future directions, and some analysis and advice for those seeking to implement and/or obtain funding for the model.

Attractiveness of the Model

In order to understand what led Utah schools to become so thoroughly attracted to the Comprehensive Guidance Model, it is necessary to recount briefly some of the events that culminated in a statewide adoption of the model. Prior to 1987, several Comprehensive Guidance workshops were conducted in Utah, and the model was widely embraced conceptually, both at the local and State Office of Education level. However, while many counselors spoke favorably of the model, systematic and full implementation failed to materialize in most schools. In retrospect, three major ingredients were probably missing: (1) a schoolwide commitment, including the school principal, (2) time to escape from ongoing activities to plan and restructure a new program, and (3) systemic training over a period of years to enable counselors to comprehend the "program" model and to assist in its implementation.

In 1989, amid growing dissatisfaction with counseling and guidance, a debate developed concerning the best approach to redirect and strengthen career guidance services in the schools. Some local vocational education directors advocated adding an additional "vocational" counselor at each school. Others, including the State Office of Education staff, saw a deeper problem and sought a solution that would rid all counselors of quasi-administrative and clerical duties. At about this time, the NOICC guidelines were published, and an effort was made to implement this model in six high schools and five middle/junior high schools. While the NOICC trainers were very capable, the program restructuring portion was not well received, and little action ensued. A decision was made to adopt the student competencies portion of the NOICC model and train the same 11 schools in the Comprehensive Guidance implementation model. The schools responded very favorably to the Comprehensive Guidance Model and began working earnestly to restructure their programs. A complete description of the state and local mechanisms used to support the efforts of these schools will be detailed later; in brief, however, schools committed to a three-year training and implementation time line, and "beyond contract time" was allocated to counselors for planning and developing their school's Comprehensive Guidance Program. At this time, another key concept was beginning to emerge—if guidance was to function as a "program," then it should receive funding in some pattern. People were beginning to realize that budgets and funding are embedded and necessary elements of an education "program."

As the restructuring of the first 11 schools progressed, word spread about their success and the improved delivery of career information and student planning in those schools. In 1990, the second year of implementation, an additional 12 schools committed to implement the program, and all 11 of the initial schools continued their program development efforts. By the end of the 1997-98 school year, 220 of the target middle/junior high schools and high schools had completed three or more years in the Comprehensive Guidance Program implementation initiative and had met State Board of Education adopted program standards. All but five secondary schools have committed to the program, attended training, and begun implementation efforts.

In retrospect, several important elements of the Comprehensive Guidance Model emerge as key factors in attracting the entire state public schools system to the model. First, the model had considerable face validity with counselors. The paradigm shift from "position" to program was not only consistent with the mission of education but also established rational consistency throughout all of the components of the model. The model had a rationale and framework for ridding counselors of numerous nonguidance activities that occupied much of their time. The concepts of "displacement"—replacing undesired or inappropriate activities or duties with desired guidance program activities—and allocating time among program components, with not less than 80 percent of the counselor's time devoted to "direct services" to students, were particularly appealing aspects of the Comprehensive Guidance Model.

Second, within a year or two, it was evident that the model had the power to spur counselors into action. School counselor teams enthusiastically arose to the challenge of remodeling their program. Administrators and the community started to become aware of changes and improved guidance in the pilot schools.

A third factor that drew the state toward the Comprehensive Guidance Model was precipitated by a State Board of Education mandate for schools to develop a Student Education Occupation Plan (SEOP) with each middle/junior high school and high school student and the student's parent or guardian. This requirement had considerable support from the state Parent Teacher Association and the Utah State Legislature. As schools implemented the Comprehensive Guidance Model with its time allocation for individual planning, counselors were finally finding the time to conduct meaningful SEOP conferences. This led to considerable levels of support for the model among state office administrators, PTA leaders, and the Utah State Legislature.

Finally, there was a growing belief in the state that funding support for educational programs should be tied to standards or accountability measures. As this concept developed, State Office of Education administrators and legislative analysts crafted a funding approach to the Utah Comprehensive Guidance Model that provided both an incentive and an approach to program accountability linked to program funding. Program standards were developed from the *structural components* of the model (steering and advisory committees, adequate resource materials and equipment, departmental budgets, staffing patterns, adequate facilities and space) and the *program components* (guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, system support), combined with the concept of time allocation and focus on student competencies. When funds were appropriated and then allocated to school districts on the basis of schools developing a guidance program that met Comprehensive Guidance program standards, a final powerful incentive was created to bring about a statewide embrace and adoption of the model.

Strategy Used in Gaining Adoption of the Model

The state leadership for counseling and guidance in Utah was aware of an ongoing effort in Missouri to systematically train counselors and implement the Comprehensive Guidance Program. A decision was made to develop an adaptation of that initiative as the "change agent" strategy for Utah. Several things were critical for an effective restructuring of a program: (1) a new model had to be endorsed and supported by a broad-based group of education leaders in the state, (2) adequate time must be devoted to the change process, (3) the change must be supported and facilitated by the key building administrator who is the principal, (4) a full team of all of the school's counselors and other key teachers and administrators must participate in the change process, and (5) the change process must be adequately funded to give the counselors planning and development time above and beyond their regular "contract" days and to provide for the purchase of needed curriculum, materials, and equipment. It was also believed that a small number of lead schools should be selected to initiate the process and that a supportive environment should exist at both the school and school district level in order to maximize the chances of successful program implementation in these lead schools.

To select the "lead schools," state staff consulted with district student services and vocational education directors from a number of districts to obtain nominations for junior and senior high schools that would be strong candidates for "lead schools." A second round of meetings was held with school principals and counselors from the "nominated schools." Each school was asked to express its interest in implementing the Comprehensive Guidance Program Model and its willingness to make a long-term commitment of resources and time to achieve a successful adoption of the model.

Eleven schools (high schools and middle/junior high schools) were selected to serve as "lead schools." Each made a commitment to attend a one-and-a-half-day inservice each August for a three-year period. This training was to be attended by the school principal and all counselors, along with any other key individuals the school selected to attend. A commitment was also made to provide the counselors with an additional seven to ten days of time, for each of the three years, to plan and develop program strategies, activities, and evaluation processes.

Pilot Schools 1989

School	*District*
Pleasant Grove High	Alpine
Meuller Park Junior High	Davis
North Layton Junior High	Davis
Kearns High	Granite
Cedar City High	Iron
Provo High	Provo
Northwest Middle	Salt Lake
San Juan High	San Juan
Wasatch High	Wasatch
Bonneville High	Weber
T. H. Bell Junior High	Weber

The State Office of Education made a commitment of $4,000 to $10,000 in funding for each of the schools, based on a formula developed by the state "Select Committee for Comprehensive Guidance." The local district vocational education director committed to provide the schools with the prescribed levels of funding after the first year of the project in the event Perkins funding was no longer available. Twelve new schools were invited to join the Comprehensive Guidance Program implementation process the following year. These twelve schools also received Perkins funds, but all funding in subsequent years for new schools has been provided by the local school districts. The Comprehensive Guidance Program was so enthusiastically received and demonstrated by the "lead schools" that 23 schools committed to participate the third year, and approximately 50 new schools committed to the program in each of the next three years. All but five schools are currently embracing program implementation.

Several key strategies contributed to the successful adoption of the model in Utah. First, a state steering committee composed of counselors, principals, district administrators, counselor training institutions, and state staff, which came to be known as the Select Committee for Comprehensive Guidance, was organized. This committee carefully reviewed state models for Comprehensive Guidance from a number of states but particularly Missouri, New Hampshire, and Alaska, and adapted/adopted from those models to create the Model for Utah Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Program. This model was refined over time and adopted by the Utah State Board of Education. The Utah model was revised and published in July 1998. Nearly all of the state's 40 local school districts have also adopted the Utah model or a slightly variant version of it over the past several years. The flexibility provided to local districts to adapt/adopt their unique version of the model has proven to be a valuable strategy for "buy in" and ownership of the model.

A second key strategy was the strong commitment and support from the district vocational education directors. The district directors not only committed to fund the school's implementation for a three-year period but also to provide long-term funding if "standards" for the Comprehensive Guidance Program could be developed and applied in such a manner as to determine if a program met the standards and was eligible for the funding. The Utah State Legislature appropriates money to a categorical fund to pay for the "added cost" of vocational programs, such as expensive equipment updates, necessary curriculum modifications to keep pace with technical advances in the workplace, and the lower teacher/pupil ratios required for effective instruction in vocational labs. Local directors resolved to allocate up to 10 percent of this categorical funding for a guidance program that was driven by "standards." It seemed only reasonable to this visionary group of vocational education directors that

a strong guidance program be considered integral to good student planning and informed course selection and that, like other "education programs," guidance not only deserved but needed funding to be successful.

The final ingredient for successful adoption of the Comprehensive Guidance Model was the high level of commitment and professionalism of the counselors in the state. All of the inservice training, model development, and even the prospect of program funding would have gone for naught had the counselors not rolled up their sleeves and gone to work. As school after school successfully adopted and implemented the program, working in most cases for three or more years to achieve base-level recognition, a high level of professionalism among school counselors began to emerge. The state counseling association adopted the model and worked hard to encourage all counselors to meet the challenge. The counselor training institutions were invited to help review the state's training standards against the model and, as a result, a recommendation was sent to the State Board of Education to substantially modify counselor certification standards in support of the Comprehensive Guidance Model. The professional standard for counselors in Utah, which has emerged, is that counselors understand and can demonstrate the skills required to meet Comprehensive Guidance Program standards.

Program Function

THE STATE ROLE

The Utah State Office of Education plays an integral role in the overall function of the Comprehensive Guidance Program. The state guidance specialist provides leadership for inservice and technical assistance to counselors, administrators, teachers, district- and state-level personnel, and others. In addition, the state provides leadership and assistance in the development of materials and resources to assist schools and districts in strengthening individual components of the Utah model. In effect, the state personnel have developed a statewide strategy for implementation of the model that individual schools and districts can easily follow.

The state guidance specialist works with districts to identify schools that are ready for training in the Comprehensive Guidance Program. Any public secondary school is eligible to participate; however, only schools that enroll students in Grade 7 or above are eligible to qualify to receive state-legislated funding. Once schools are approved by districts to begin the training and the implementation process, school guidance teams are organized. These teams make a commitment to attend three years of state-sponsored training. The school guidance teams consist of counselors, administrators, teachers, and others who are key to the overall success of the program. Schools experience greater program success with the support of a visionary, supportive administrator who is involved in the training from the onset.

The state-sponsored inservice training is held annually in August. School guidance teams attend their appropriate level of training: a first-year, second-year, or third-year session. Dr. Norman Gysbers has served as the key instructor in the state's extensive inservice training effort since August 1989. Each year, the first-year schools are trained in the basic components of developing and managing a school guidance program and are introduced to the Utah model. The second- and third-year schools review Comprehensive Guidance Program concepts, their past year's accomplishments, and then move on to a more focused training concentrating on the areas of program assessment and evaluation and any "Utah specific" Comprehensive Guidance Program issues. The Comprehensive Guidance training has been a tremendous success. Counselors report that the training they receive on the Comprehensive Guidance Program has enabled them to perform effectively. August 1996 emerged as a peak training year. More than 600 educators participated in first-year, second-year, or third-year training. In addition, in excess of 350 educators attended a reunion schools session. Well over 1,000 Utah educators have received at least three years of training in the Comprehensive Guidance Program.

The state specialist also plans and provides supplemental training in the implementation of the Comprehensive Guidance Model. As schools approached the completion of the required three years of training, it became apparent that the state needed to organize

supplemental training to provide some method by which school teams could have access to training in the model and to information and resources available that contribute to the dynamic nature of the program. It was evident that schools have a desire to keep informed on current Comprehensive Guidance Program issues, to network with other schools, and to identify ways to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. A reunion schools session was added to the traditional August training in 1994.

In addition to the August training, the state specialist organizes annually a Rural School Counselor Conference and a Wasatch Front (Urban) School Counselor Conference. Both conferences are structured with general sessions and breakout sessions addressing each of the four components of the Comprehensive Guidance Model. The state specialist also organizes and supports regional and district-level inservice training activities as needed.

The state guidance specialist, in consultation with the state Select Committee for Comprehensive Guidance, has developed standards and objectives for the Comprehensive Guidance Program that have been approved by the Utah State Board of Education. These standards are also embedded in a statute that defines the parameters of the Comprehensive Guidance Program and the state's contribution to the program.

State Statute for Comprehensive Guidance

53A-17a-131.8. State contribution to the Comprehensive Guidance Program.

(1) The state's contribution of $6,900,784 for a Comprehensive Guidance Program is appropriated to the State Board of Education for distribution to school districts as follows:

(a) the board shall distribute the appropriation to districts to be used at their secondary schools in grades 7-12, with the following priority: (i) grades 9-12; and (ii) grades 7-8 for those schools which meet program standards, to provide a guidance curriculum and individual educational/occupational program for each student at the school;

(b) each school shall meet qualification criteria established by rules made by the State Board of Education in order to receive moneys under this program; and

(c) the appropriation shall also be used to provide responsive services and eliminate nonguidance activities currently being performed by counselors.

(2) (a) It is anticipated that under this program counselors will increase direct services to students to involve at least 80% of the counselors' time and that districts shall document this with on-site review teams.

(b) Districts shall provide training to their secondary teachers on their role in assisting in the development and implementation of SEOPs.

(3) The state superintendent of public instruction shall:

(a) prepare an inventory of working SEOPs for networking with schools throughout the state; and

(b) monitor the program and provide an annual report on its progress and success.

Amended by Chapter 234, 1998 General Session

Administrative Rules for Comprehensive Guidance Utah State Board of Education

R277-462-3

A. **(3)** Comprehensive Guidance Program funds shall be distributed to districts for each school within the district that meet all of the following criteria:

(a) A schoolwide student/parent/teacher needs assessment completed within the last four years prior to the application deadline for funding;

(b) Documentation that a school advisory and steering committee have been organized and are functioning effectively;

(c) Evidence that 80% of aggregate counselor time is devoted to DIRECT services to students;

(d) A program that reflects a commitment that ALL students in the school benefit from the Comprehensive Guidance Program;

(e) Approval of the program by the local board of education;

(f) The establishment of the SEOP requirement for ALL students as both a process and a product consistent with Board rules, the elementary and secondary core curriculum, and high school graduation requirements;

(g) Assistance for students in developing job seeking and finding skills and in post-high school placement;

(h) Inclusion in the guidance curriculum of activities for each of the twelve National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) competencies (available from the state guidance specialist);

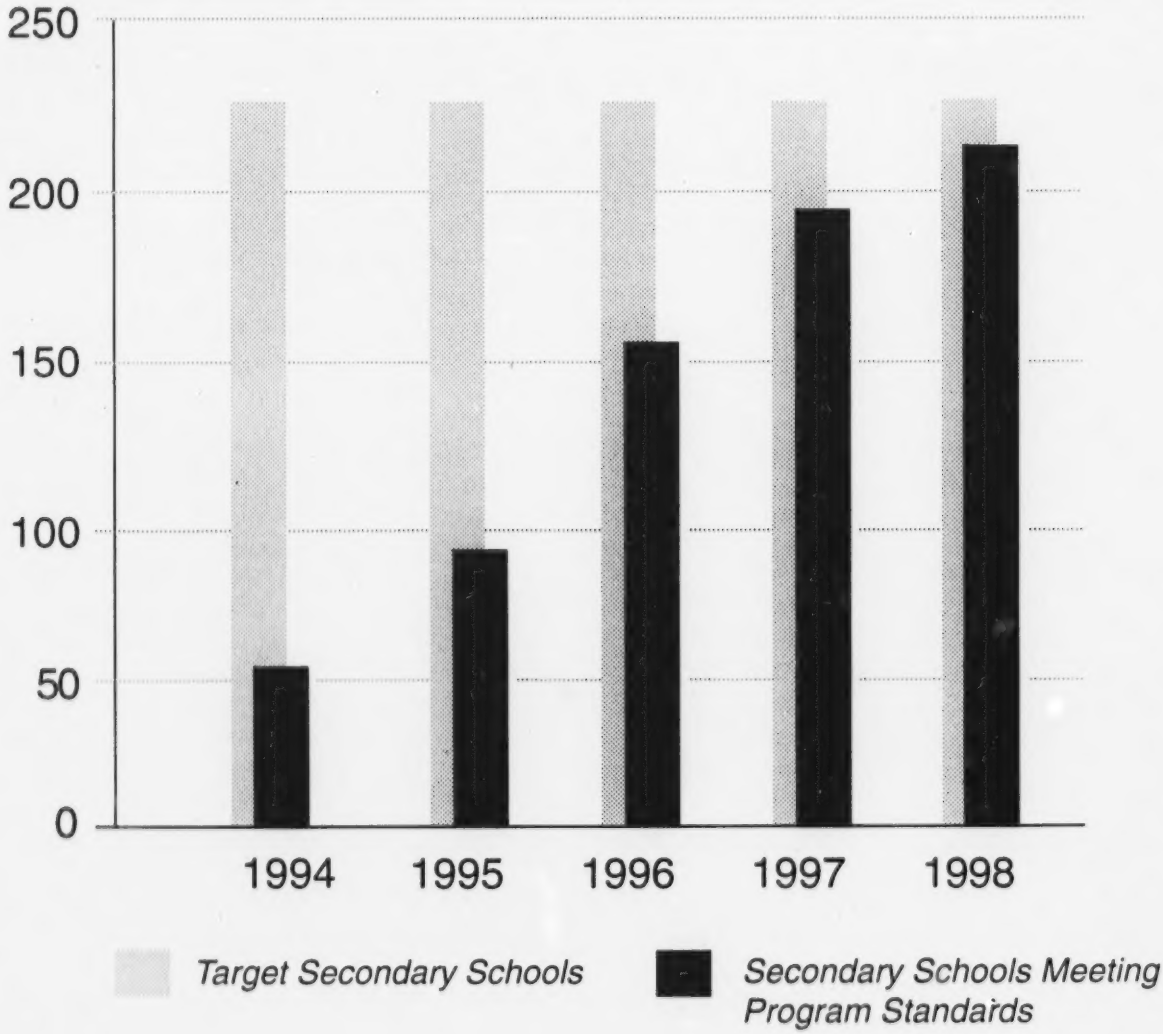
(i) Distribution to and discussion with feeder schools of the Comprehensive Guidance Program; and

(j) Sufficient district budget to adequately provide for guidance facilities, materials, equipment, and clerical support. (Utah State Board of Education Administrative Rule R277-462-3)

The state guidance specialist monitors the status of program implementation and makes recommendations to the Utah State Board of Education for funding increases. The funding (building block) request proceeds through a rigorous prioritization process. After this process takes place, a recommendation is made by the Utah State Office of Education to the Utah State Legislature for additional program funds. This process requires looking at the funding formula and the total number of schools trained in Comprehensive Guidance and anticipating their readiness for meeting program standards. The formula used to calculate the funds schools receive is based of the Weighted Pupil Unit (WPU) and school enrollment. For example, schools with enrollment of 1-399 students = 6 WPUs, 400-799 students = 12 WPUs, 800-1,199 students = 18 WPUs, and 1,200+ students = 24 WPUs. The value of the WPU increases with inflation. The current value of the WPU for FY99 is $1,854. Schools receive funds in approximate increments of $11,000, $22,000, $33,000, and $44,000. The legislature has been very consistent in appropriating enough funding for the number of schools meeting program standards each year and qualifying to receive funding. Total appropriation for Comprehensive Guidance in FY99 is $6.9 million, which will fund some 220 secondary schools that have met program standards. Funds can be used for personnel costs, career center equipment and materials, inservice training, extended day or year if required to run the program, and guidance curriculum materials. Funds cannot be used for nonguidance purposes or to supplant funds already being provided for the guidance program.

By 1994, 53 secondary schools had progressed sufficiently in the program implementation process to meet the Utah State Board of Education approved program standards and qualify to receive their share of the $1.5 million appropriated by the legislature. In 1995, the number of secondary schools meeting program standards increased to 95, and total funds appropriated by the legislature increased to $3.0 million. By 1996, 155 secondary schools had met program standards, and total funds appropriated increased to $4.3 million. In 1997, 193 schools had met program standards with total funds available at $4.9 million. And finally, by the end of the 1997-98 school year, 220 secondary schools had met program standards and qualified to receive their share of $6.9 million. The program is now fully funded. It is our best estimate that the remaining target secondary schools will meet program standards and qualify to receive funding early on in FY99.

SCHOOLS MEETING COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE PROGRAM STANDARDS



REGIONAL AND DISTRICT ROLES

Utah's 40 school districts have been organized geographically into nine regions. The regional and district roles in the Comprehensive Guidance Program center on the program-approval process. When a district believes that a school's Comprehensive Guidance Program has progressed to the point that the program standards can be met, the school guidance team is asked to complete a self-study and submit it to the district vocational education director or the district student services director for review and recommendation. If the district-level administrators find the program meets program standards, the district vocational education director recommends the program to the regional committee for vocational education for review.

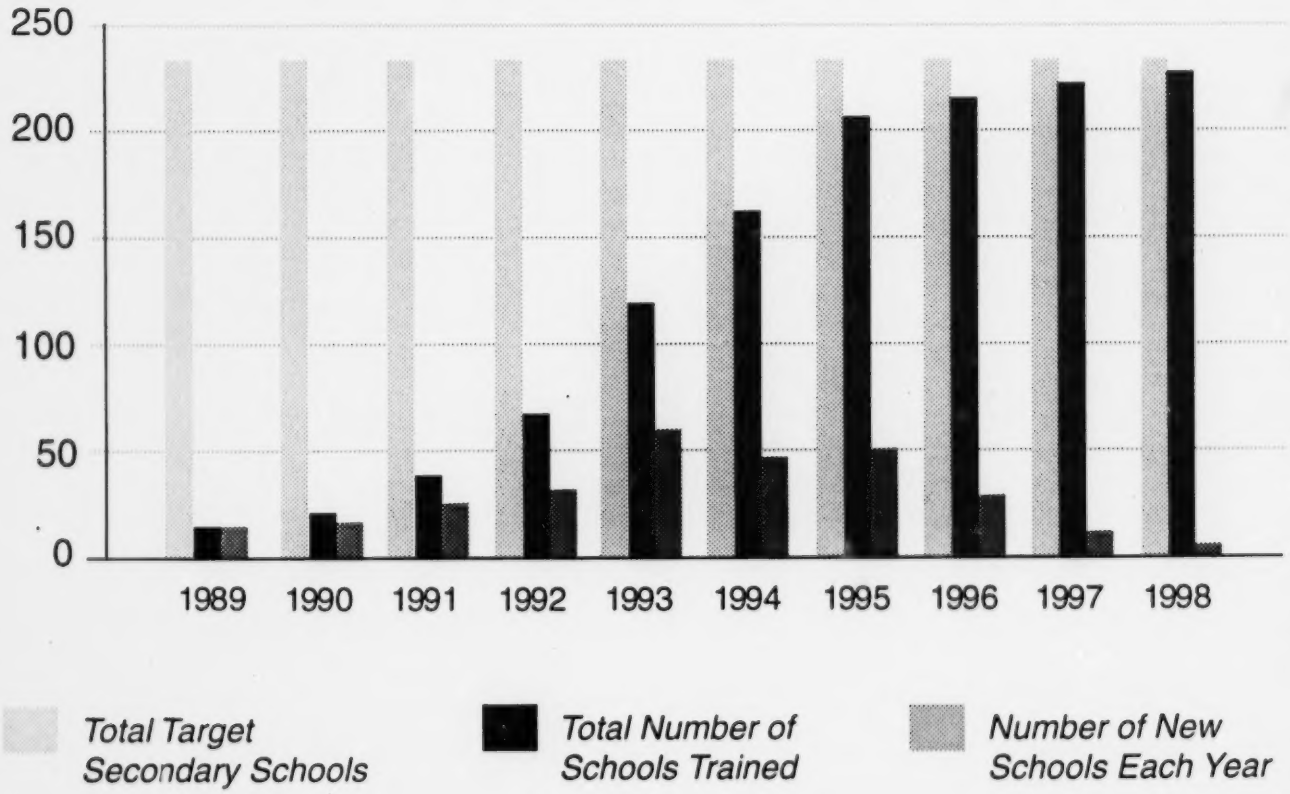
The district vocational education director and student services director have the responsibility to formulate an on-site review team composed of an vocational education director, a student services director, two counselors, and a principal, all of whom are familiar with the components of the Comprehensive Guidance Program. This team visits the school and reviews the Comprehensive Guidance Program. Where feasible, all review team members should be from outside of the applicant's district. The regional review committee will certify the degree to which the guidance program meets program standards.

Upon receiving approval of the program by the regional review committee, the district vocational education director will forward a copy of the school program review form, school program manual, and any other pertinent information to the state guidance specialist. District administrators, school principals, and school guidance department chairs certify in writing that schools have met and will maintain program standards as outlined by the Utah State Office of Education and the Utah State Legislature. Schools meeting program standards will be reviewed every three years. The State Office of Education is also required to collect data and complete an annual report on the progress and success of the Comprehensive Guidance Program for the legislature.

Program Success

Implementation of the Utah Comprehensive Guidance Model began with 11 pilot secondary schools in August 1989. These schools represented both rural and urban areas statewide. The schools were selected on the basis of district recommendation with consideration given to guidance team leadership qualities and capabilities and, more importantly, visionary, supportive administrators. The number of schools involved in program implementation increased incrementally over the next few years. Twelve new schools were added in 1990, 14 in 1991, 21 in 1992, 57 in 1993, 48 in 1994, 50 in 1995, 16 in 1996, 8 in 1997, and 3 in 1998.

PROGRESSION OF SCHOOLS INVOLVED IN COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE TRAINING



Initially, Utah officials recognized that the vision of this new paradigm for guidance was not likely to become a reality unless funds were made available to train school counselors, administrators, teachers, and other school personnel key to the success of the program. Once legislative, budgetary support for program implementation was established as a separate funding program, participation of secondary schools in the program grew dramatically. In 1993, the Utah State Legislature appropriated $1.5 million to fund the first phase of a four-phase effort, and the number of schools participating in the program doubled from the previous year. Illustrated in the chart on page 16 is the progression of schools involved in inservice training over a ten-year period. Currently, all but five of Utah's secondary schools (middle/junior high schools and high schools) are involved at varying levels of program implementation, and the 1998 Utah State Legislature approved $6.9 million in ongoing funds for the Comprehensive Guidance Program.

Beyond the scope of school participation, other areas of program success can be identified. In a survey conducted in November 1994, it was reported that school districts hired 23 additional counselors and 44 paraprofessionals with Comprehensive Guidance funds. Because funds can be used to hire additional personnel, the pupil/counselor ratio, while still very high, improved to approximately 480/1 by 1995.

A study on the *Student Education Occupation Plan and Comprehensive Guidance in Utah Schools* was conducted in 1994 by the Institute for Behavioral Research in Creativity (IBRIC) to gather detailed information about actual SEOP practices and products in 49 "approved" secondary schools. Survey results indicated a broad range of improvements in SEOP and career-related activities as a result of implementation of the Comprehensive Guidance Program. The most significant improvements were increased counselor time spent on SEOPs, class time spent on guidance curriculum, and parental involvement in the SEOP process. Although the study recognizes vast improvements in SEOP, overall obstacles identified involve resources, such as time, money, and counselor/student ratios.

A more recent study, *An Evaluation of the Comprehensive Guidance Program in Utah Public Schools*, conducted by IBRIC in fall 1997, was commissioned by the Utah State Office of Education to determine the impacts of more fully implemented Comprehensive Guidance programs on the SEOP process and related indicators in Utah schools. The study involved all secondary schools that had met program standards (193 schools) prior to October 1, 1997. Of the 193 schools that received survey packets, 176 responded. The packet included surveys to be completed by counselors, the principal, and three randomly selected teachers. The study concludes that more fully implemented Comprehensive Guidance programs have had positive impacts on all aspects of the SEOP process as well as other aspects of guidance in the schools.

The major successes of the Comprehensive Guidance Program were placement of state and district SEOP policies; increased parent support and involvement in the SEOP process; more available and accessible career exploration resources; increased amount of time counselors spend working directly with students; effective training in the Comprehensive Guidance Program; and increased student participation and student interest in the SEOP process. Areas for improvement were identified as training teachers in their role in the SEOP process and guidance activities; securing administrative support for the program; developing information management of

the SEOP; spending more time for the responsive services component of the guidance program; overcoming funding obstacles; modifying course offerings and curriculum to support students' goals and interests; and continually working to reach 100 percent of the students through an individual conference.

In addition to the surveys completed by counselors, administrators, and teachers, two databases managed by the Evaluation and Assessment Section of the Utah State Office of Education made it possible to examine the impact of levels of implementation of the Comprehensive Guidance Program on student outcomes. These databases are the annual Survey of the Intentions and Accomplishments of Utah High School Seniors and the statewide ACT database, which is furnished annually by the American College Testing Program. From the total of nearly 100 high schools that participated in the survey, a matched set of high-implementation and low-implementation schools was selected. Students in high-implementing schools rated their overall educational preparation as more adequate and their job preparation as better, and fewer students in high-implementing schools viewed their program as "general."

In addition, students in high-implementing schools took more advanced math and science courses and took more vocational/technical courses. Finally, students in high-implementing schools had higher ACT scores in every area of the test.

The Comprehensive Guidance Program has been recognized by Utah's Parent Teacher Association as the driving force behind meaningful SEOP development for ALL students. The Utah State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (SOICC) has taken an active role in promoting the program by providing a number of resources, such as a career tabloids, the *Job Outlook in Brief* publication, and the *Utah Career Guide*, and by participating in staff development activities. The SOICC-sponsored computerized career information delivery system (CIDS), Utah Choices, has promoted consistency of career information being communicated to Utah secondary students and others through schools, the Department of Employment Security, Rehabilitation, and other agencies. And finally, the program has received positive media coverage statewide in both print and video media.

Student Education Occupation Plan (SEOP) A Successful Feature

It is evident that the Comprehensive Guidance Program enjoys widespread support, but a special enthusiasm for the personalized education occupation planning component deserves further attention. The SEOP is in effect the individual planning component of the Utah model. The SEOP is a process that involves activities planned and directed by school counselors that assist students in planning, monitoring, and managing their own learning as well as their personal and career development. Through guidance activities, students are given opportunities to set and evaluate their educational and career goals and to connect them to activities that will help them achieve their goals.

The Utah State Board of Education has had policy in place since 1984 requiring secondary schools to assist every student in preparing an individual SEOP. The Utah State Public Education Strategic Plan (1992) envisions a system that personalizes education for each student with 100 percent of Utah's students achieving the objectives of their individually developed plan. In recent years, the Comprehensive Guidance Program has emerged as a driving force for SEOP improvement. With strong emphasis on the SEOP, schools have created impressive formats for documenting student goals, plans, and progress. Schools have also recognized the importance of parental involvement in the SEOP process.

The SEOP involves a process and a product that are directed by individual student needs, educational needs and requirements, and realistic assessment. As part of the planning process, student interests, talents, achievements, and goals are reviewed in an annual conference with parents and a school counselor. Record of the planning process activities is kept in a personal portfolio or SEOP planning document.

Common elements of a successful SEOP include:

- Coordinated guidance curriculum activities, sequenced by grade level, in areas of self-knowledge, education and occupation exploration, and career planning
- Individual aptitude, interest, and/or achievement assessment
- Parental involvement through an annual conference with student, parent, and counselor
- Well-defined objectives, such as setting goals, planning to attain goals, and reviewing progress toward goals
- A student education and career planning document that includes:
  - Evidence of school-to-work, education, and career goals
  - A written four-year plan
  - Evidence of Board of Education graduation requirements
  - Evidence of student, parent, and counselor participation in the planning process
  - Record of SEOP process activities

Stronger legislation is now in place that requires school districts to establish policies to provide for the effective implementation of the SEOP process and to train teachers in their role in SEOP development (Utah Code Annotated 53A-1a-106 and 53A-17a-131.8). With new SEOP legislation, school counselors face new challenges to:

1) Integrate the SEOP process into a balanced Comprehensive Guidance Program that suggests that 35 percent of counselor time at the high school level and 25 percent of counselor time at the middle/junior high school level is spent on individual planning.

2) Take the current school SEOP implementation plan to a higher level.

3) Design a plan for SEOP implementation that is in compliance with state statute and board rules.

The Comprehensive Guidance Program Model, through the individual planning (SEOP) component, has given considerable attention to special population students. The SEOP process is designed to include all Utah students. Through the effort of a federally funded project called STUDY (Successful Transition of Utah's Disabled Youth), a series of workshops was held throughout the state to train special educators, school administrators, vocational education teachers, vocational rehabilitation personnel, and others about the SEOP process. The core of the training explained the intensity of student "plans"—all students have an SEOP. Some students may have an IEP, and/or a 504 accommodation plan, and/or a vocational rehabilitation plan, etc., in addition to the SEOP. The training as well as the philosophy were positively accepted by educators throughout the state. Districts and schools are working to coordinate the student, parent, educator conferences held in conjunction with each plan. They are also collaborating as they create student planning documents.

Other Successful Features

A strong successful feature of the model is the peer review evaluation process based on statewide program-approval standards. The peer review process provides opportunities for district and school administrators and counselors to leave their local areas and/or regions of assignment to review schools for Comprehensive Guidance Program approval. This process facilitates an opportunity for training and networking among educators and ultimately strengthens the program implementation process.

Local schools and districts have taken the leadership role in developing materials, resources, and technology to support the model. For example, Davis School District has written and published guidance curriculum activities aligned with each of the NOICC competencies and indicators. This curriculum has been distributed statewide. In addition, this same school district has developed a districtwide computerized SEOP process, complete with opportunity for parents to access student information at home through the Internet.

Provo High School in the Provo School District has instituted a telephone registration system connected to SEOP goals and "next step" planning. Students are involved in multiyear planning at Provo High School as they make course selections based on career goals. Other schools and school districts have followed suit and are implementing telephone registration systems.

A handbook for the SEOP process, *Planning for Utah's Future One Student at a Time*, was developed by state staff and members of the Select Committee for Comprehensive Guidance.

With the support from the Utah State Office of Education, the Utah Education Network, and UtahLINK, a home page on the Internet for both the Comprehensive Guidance Program and the SEOP is now a reality. Through the SEOP home page, students can link to a broad base of education and career information, with the emphasis of the home page focusing on the importance of student planning.

Three chapters of the recent publication, *Comprehensive Guidance Programs that Work-II* (Gysbers & Henderson, 1997), focus on the success of the Comprehensive Guidance Program in Utah. One chapter represents the overall Utah program, another chapter describes the program in Davis School District schools, and the third chapter describes the Box Elder High School Comprehensive Guidance Program.

In 1996, two Utah Comprehensive Guidance programs—Davis School District and Fairfield Junior High School—were recognized in the top three nationally through the Planning for Life Awards Program. This is an annual recognition program to identify exemplary career guidance programs. It is sponsored by the U.S. Army and the National Consortium of State Guidance Supervisors. In 1997, Fairfield Junior High School resubmitted the application along with two other schools—Taylorsville High School and Provo High School. Fairfield Junior High School was named as the national winner and the first junior high school ever to win the national honor. In 1998, Provo High School resubmitted the application and Utah again walked away with the national award for exemplary career guidance programs.

Future Goals

The most ambitious goal Utah faces is to move all secondary schools to "approved" status and to secure legislative funding. This will require continued leadership at the state level and support from local districts and individual schools. The importance of funding the Comprehensive Guidance Program for all students, grades kindergarten through high school, cannot be overemphasized. Plans are in place to extend Comprehensive Guidance Program implementation to include elementary schools. Seven pilot elementary sites were selected in 1996 through a competitive review process, but a great amount of work must be done in order to establish an elementary Comprehensive Guidance Program in 444 elementary schools. Only 17 of Utah's 40 school districts have elementary guidance personnel in place, and they stretch their services, on average, to two or more schools.

As Comprehensive Guidance enjoys widespread support, it also faces a serious challenge to interface a guidance program with services provided by other student services personnel. Clearly, many other student services professionals have felt "left out" of the Comprehensive Guidance Program implementation process and legislative funding. Districts and schools are encouraged to collaborate among student services personnel to strengthen the responsive services component of the Utah model. The goal is to expand and coordinate responsive services delivery with a state-supported student services committee.

Advice to New Implementers

While the Comprehensive Guidance Program Model is certainly of value to an individual counselor, it is most effective when implemented as a school, or better still, as a district program. The strongest programs are in those schools that receive strong and consistent support from the district. For this reason, a school that is considering adopting the model should elicit a commitment from the principal to be involved in the training and implementation process. It is critical for the building principal to understand the conceptual framework of the model, the language of the model, and the desired outcomes. In short, the principal must become a full stockholder in the new program.

It is also essential that all of the counselors in the school and, if possible, some key teachers and administrators participate as members of the implementation "team" and members of the "steering" and "advisory" commit-

tees. The proper formation and use of the steering and advisory committees has proven to be extremely beneficial to schools as they move to adopt the model. The supportive voice and action of key opinion formers in the school and in the community have often proven to be invaluable in establishing advocacy for the program. One school district board added an additional counselor in each of its secondary schools as a result of input from a school-level advisory committee.

For those who have already made a decision to implement the program, you should be willing to participate in the basic training for the model two or three times and periodically review your implementation efforts against the model. On numerous occasions, counselors have expressed gratitude that they were able to attend a second and third year of training. Frequently heard was the expression, "I don't know why, but this is my third year and I am finally really getting it!" It seems that the new model represents such a fundamental shift in thinking that it takes both time and repetition for all of the pieces to fit together or have full meaning in a counselor's mind. While it seems cumbersome, there is a great deal of value in documenting time allocation. Implementing a Comprehensive Guidance Program requires a balanced allocation of time. This can only be accomplished when counselors know where their time is being spent.

Implementers of the model should make provision for the program implementation team to plan and develop its program. This must be time away from the demands of team members' daily routine. Four to six days before school starts and then two to four days intermittently allocated during the year provides the minimal amount of time needed to plan and develop the program. After several years, these functions can be absorbed within the system support component of the model. However, added time is critical in the first several years of implementation.

Finally, counselors should be patient and continue to make incremental improvements in their program. Three to five years are needed to make the transition to the Comprehensive Guidance Program. Some schools have developed very strong programs in three years, and others have more to do after five years. Most schools are able to meet the state "minimal" program standards in three years. Counselors have a professional responsibility to constantly seek for an incremental improvement of the program. No counselor should be satisfied if his or her school guidance program is not better this year than it was last year.

The counselors in Utah report that implementing a Comprehensive Guidance Program is very hard work. Many say they have never worked harder in their lives. They also say they have never been more happy or satisfied in their professional role. There is an almost universal expression of an enhanced professional image and sense of professional pride and increased opportunity to productively affect students' lives. The school counselor's view of the worth of the program is mirrored in the expressions of administrators, school board members, the PTA organization, the Governor's Office, state legislators, and a wide range of other groups that enthusiastically support the program. So, go for it! Hard work will pay rich dividends.

Resources

As a result of a thorough and competitive review process, the state, under the direction of the Utah SOICC, selected in 1991 *Choices* (a Careerware product) as Utah's "state-sponsored" career information delivery system. Today, the Utah *Choices* program is accessible to virtually every high school, with *Choices Junior* and *Career Futures* accessible to all middle/junior high schools.

The Davis School District, under the direction of the district coordinator for Comprehensive Guidance, developed two volumes (middle/junior high and high school levels) of guidance curriculum activities. The curriculum activities align with the NOICC competencies and indicators. The State Office of Education has distributed copies of the grade-level-appropriate curriculum manual to each secondary school.

The Applied Technology Education Resource Center has purchased a substantial number of materials and resources that support the Comprehensive Guidance Program. The materials range from career development textbooks, workbooks, magazines, and videos to individual school Comprehensive Guidance Program manuals.

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